

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

Helping Students with Disabilities Transition from High School to the Workforce

STUDENT

As a FRESHMAN or SOPHOMORE:

- ☐ Attend your IEP meetings and play an active role to represent your preferences and needs.
- ☐ Make a list of what you would like to do after graduation, including your personal and career goals.
- ☐ Work your way to leading or co-leading your own IEP meetings.
- ☐ Work on developing your social and interpersonal skills. Personal qualities and interpersonal skills should be developed through classes selected with parent and counselor input.
- ☐ Explore career options with career counselors, guidance counselors and teachers during your freshman year.
- ☐ Participate in valid and reliable interest testing to ensure the career you are looking at is achievable.
- ☐ While in high school, learn all you can about the nature of your disability and how it impacts your learning.
- ☐ During your sophomore year, review your transcript and make sure you are completing the courses necessary for graduation.
- ☐ Participate in extracurricular, volunteer and community activities.
- ☐ Consider taking a summer job or volunteer position.
- ☐ Meet with a benefits planner to assist you in understanding the relationship of income and SSA benefits and health care.
- ☐ Register, prepare for and take the Pre-SAT or the Pre-ACT, also known as the PSAT and PLAN, and request test accommodations, if appropriate.
- ☐ Research what employers are looking for, the type of companies you would like to work for, and places you would like to live.
- ☐ Research how your preferred type of work may impact your disability.

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As a JUNIOR:

- ## NOTES:

A decorative background featuring a series of horizontal lines. Overlaid on these lines are several large, light-colored geometric shapes: a large parallelogram on the left, a smaller parallelogram in the center, and a large triangle on the right. The shapes are rendered in a light gray or off-white color, creating a modern, architectural feel.

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PARENT

When your child is a FRESHMAN or SOPHOMORE:

- ☐ Meet with the IEP team to begin transition planning prior to your son or daughter turning 16, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act.
- ☐ Make sure the transition IEP plan focuses on your son or daughter's plan to enter the workforce.
- ☐ Invite representatives of adult agencies to IEP meetings in the junior year. A smoother transition to these services will result if these providers are included as early as possible.
- ☐ Encourage your son or daughter's active participation in IEP meetings.
- ☐ Prepare for meetings together to not only create quality time, but to help them solidify their aspirations and goals. Your son or daughter's involvement in this process gives them practice in speaking up for themselves.
- ☐ Teach and exemplify problem-solving skills, including information gathering and weighing options. You should make every effort to involve your son or daughter in activities that promote independence and help them self-advocate.
- ☐ Plan early. Throughout high school, help your son or daughter work on developing social and interpersonal skills.
- ☐ Explore career options with your son or daughter by researching potential choices.
- ☐ Encourage your child to participate in valid and reliable interest testing to ensure the career they are looking at is achievable.
- ☐ Meet with a benefits planner to understand the impact of income on SSA benefits and healthcare.
- ☐ Review your son or daughter's high school transcript to make sure they are completing the courses necessary for graduation.
- ☐ Stress the importance of participating in extracurricular, volunteer and community activities.

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When your child is a JUNIOR:

- ## NOTES:

A decorative background featuring horizontal lines and geometric shapes. On the right side, there is a large, light gray triangle pointing towards the left. Overlaid on this triangle and the background lines are two parallel, light gray zigzag lines that move from the left edge towards the right, creating a sense of motion or a stylized 'Z' shape.

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CAREER COUNSELOR AND EDUCATOR

For all STUDENTS:

- ☐ Inform students with disabilities of key differences between the world of education and the world of work.
- ☐ Help parents understand their son or daughter with a disability will no longer be covered by the IDEA legislation once they enter the workforce.
- ☐ Give students and their families advice to understand their legal rights and responsibilities including becoming familiar with the provisions of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.
- ☐ Encourage students to be active members of their IEP team.
- ☐ Connect students with courses leading to the development of strong soft skills and an understanding of technology.
- ☐ Encourage students and parents to make interest testing a key part of the transition process.
- ☐ Help students understand their disability, the functional limitations and the necessary accommodations.
- ☐ Refer students to Vocational Rehabilitation, in order for VR to help students achieve goals.
- ☐ Build on the student's strengths. Highlight the things they can do with or without accommodations. Praise accomplishments and discuss what is needed to work with the adverse effects of their disability.
- ☐ Be honest and candid with the student and parent. Present realistic options and help the student understand the differences between school and work.

NOTES:
